

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Cancel claims 2, 17, and 30 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend the claims and add new claims 46-48 as shown below:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A process for stabilizing antioxidant compounds selected from the group consisting of levogyrous acid (LAA), proanthocyanidines (OPCs) and mixtures thereof, ~~characterized by comprising:~~

~~the step of~~ contacting said antioxidant compounds, in an aqueous medium, with an oxygen-removing compound, a metallic ion sequestering compound and ~~an~~ a reducing agent.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the antioxidant is LAA.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that it further comprises~~ wherein the antioxidant compounds are a mixture of LAA and a proantocyanidines proanthocyanidines (OPCs).

Claim 5 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen-removing compound is a glycol.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen-removing compound is selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, butylene glycol and mixtures thereof, ~~more preferably propylene glycol.~~

Claim 7 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is selected from the group consisting of ethylene phosphonic acids, ~~the salts thereof~~, and mixtures thereof, or selected from the group consisting of phosphonates that include di-, tri-, tetra- and pentavalent acids, ~~their salts thereof~~ and mixtures thereof.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 7, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium salt of 1-hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphonic) acid, ethylene diamine tetra(methylenephosphonic) acid, sodium salt of ethylene diamene tetra (methylene phosphonic) acid, diethylene diamine penta (methylenephosphonic) acid, sodium salt of diethylene diamine penta (methylene phosphonic) acid, 1-hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphonic) acid, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is 1-hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphonic) acid.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the reducing agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium dithionite, sodium bisulfites, calcium bissulfites, potassium bissulfites, and Glutathione, ~~as well as the~~ and mixtures thereof.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the reducing agent is Glutathione or sodium dithionite.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized by~~ comprising a first step of preparing an aqueous solution containing the oxygen-removing

compound, the metallic ion sequestering agent and the reducing agent, and a second ~~stage~~ step of adding the antioxidant to the thus prepared composition, in a aqueous medium.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 12, ~~characterized in fact of~~ wherein the composition formed in the first step comprises the oxygen-removing compound in a range from about 10% to about 25%, the metallic ion sequestering agent in a range from about 0.01% to about 0.20%, the ~~oxidation reaction reverting compound~~ reducing agent at a concentration of about 0.01% to about 0.5%, the content of the antioxidant being from about 0.01 % to about 30%, all the percentages being by weight based on the total weight of the composition.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 13, ~~characterized in fact of~~ wherein the composition formed in the first step comprises the oxygen-removing compound in a range from about 16% to about 19%, the metallic ion sequestering agent in a range from about 0.10% to about 0.20% and the ~~oxidation reaction reverting compound~~ reducing agent at a concentration from about 0.05% to about 0.2%, the content of the antioxidant being from about 0.5% to about 20% by weight.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A process in accordance with claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the antioxidant is an OPC, and wherein said first composition also comprises LAA.

Claim 16 (currently amended): An aqueous composition comprising at least one antioxidant compound selected from the group consisting of levogyrous ascorbic acid (LAA), proanthocyanidines (OPCs) and mixtures thereof, ~~characterized by further comprising~~ an oxygen-removing compound, a metallic ion sequestering agent and an oxidation reaction reverting compound.

Claim 17 (canceled)

Claim 18 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 16,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the antioxidant is LAA.

Claim 19 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 16,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the antioxidant comprises ~~proantocianidines (OPC's)~~ compounds are  
a mixture of LAA and proanthocyanidines (OPCs).

Claim 20 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 16,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen-removing compound is a glycol.

Claim 21 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 20,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen-removing compound is selected from the group  
consisting of propylene glycol, butylene glycol and mixtures thereof, ~~more preferably propylene~~  
~~glycol.~~

Claim 22 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 16,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is selected from the group  
consisting of ethylene phosphonic acids, ~~the~~ salts thereof, and mixtures thereof, or selected from  
the group consisting of phosphonates including di-, tri-, tetra- and pentavalent acids, ~~their~~ salts  
thereof and mixtures thereof.

Claim 23 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 22,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is selected from the group

consisting of sodium salt of 1-hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphate) acid, ethylene diamine tetra (methylenephosphonic) acid, sodium salt of ethylene diamine tetra (methylene phosphonic) acid, diethylene diamine penta(methylenephosphonic) acid, sodium salt of diethylene diamine penta(methylene phosphonic) acid, hydroxy ethylidene (1,1diphosphate) acid and mixtures thereof.

Claim 24 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 23, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is 1-hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphate) acid.

Claim 25 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 16, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxidation reaction reverting compound ~~reducing agent~~ is selected from the group consisting of ~~comprising~~ sodium dithionite, sodium bissulfites, calcium bissulfites, potassium bissulfites, ~~and~~ Glutathione, ~~as well as~~ and mixtures thereof.

Claim 26 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 25, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxidation reaction reverting compound is Glutathione or sodium dithionite.

Claim 27 (currently amended): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 18, ~~characterized by~~ comprising from about 0.01 % to about 30% of LAA, from about 10% to about 25% of an oxygen-removing compound, from about 0.01% to about 0.20% of a metallic ion sequestering agent, and from about 0.01 % to about 0.5% of an oxidation reaction reverting compound.

Claim 28 (currently amended): A two-phase aqueous cosmetic composition, ~~characterized by~~

comprising, in a first phase, at least one antioxidant compound selected from the group consisting of levogyrous ascorbic acid (LAA), proanthocyanidines (OPCs) and mixtures thereof, an oxygen-removing compound, a metallic ion sequestering agent and ~~an oxidation reaction reverting compound~~ a reducing agent and, in a second phase, at least one hydrating compound.

Claim 29 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the weight ratio between the first and second phases is from about 12: 8 to 20: 11.

Claim 30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen-removing compound is a glycol.

Claim 32 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 31, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen-removing compound is selected from the group consisting of propylene glycol, butylene glycol and the mixtures thereof, ~~more preferably propylene glycol~~.

Claim 33 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is selected from the group consisting of ethylene phosphonic acids, ~~the salts~~ thereof, and mixtures thereof, or selected from the group consisting of phosphonates that include di-, tri-, tetra- and pentavalent acids, ~~their~~ salts thereof and mixtures thereof.

Claim 34 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 33, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium salt of 1-hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphate) acid, ethylene diamine tetra (methylenephosphonic) acid, sodium salt of ethylene diamine tetra (methylene phosphonic) acid, diethylene diamine penta(methylenephosphonic) acid, sodium salt of diethylene diamine penta(methylene phosphonic) acid, hydroxyethylidene (1,1-diphosphate) acid and mixtures thereof.

Claim 35 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 34, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metallic ion sequestering agent is 1-hydroxy ethylidene (1,1-diphosphate) acid.

Claim 36 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28 ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the reducing agent is selected from the group comprising sodium dithionite, sodium bissulfites, calcium bissulfites, potassium bissulfites, ~~and~~ Glutathione, ~~as well as~~ and mixtures thereof.

Claim 37 (currently amended): An aqueous two-phase composition in accordance with claim 36, ~~characterized in that the oxidation reaction reverting compound~~ reducing agent is Glutathione or sodium dithionite.

Claim 38 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the hydrating compound is glycerin.

Claim 39 (~~previously presented~~): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the second phase comprises ceramides in a liquid crystal emulsion form.

Claim 40 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 39, ~~characterized by comprising~~ wherein, in the first phase, an aqueous composition comprising an amount of 0.2 to 10% of ascorbic acid and about 0.001 to 2,2% of OPC's and, in the second phase, glycerin in a range from 1.0 to 10%, and 0.5 to 3,0% of ceramides contained in a liquid crystal emulsion, all percentages being based on the total weight of the composition.

Claim 41 (currently amended): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized by further comprising~~ wherein, in its second phase, about 13 to 25% of emollients, about 1 to 4% of an anti-radical agent, about 0.001 to 0.3% of a preservative, and about 0.05 to 0.6% of a thickening agent.

Claim 42 (currently amended): A composition in accordance with claim 28, ~~characterized by being~~ wherein said composition is in the form of an homogeneous emulsion containing an emulsifying system comprising a first emulsifier ~~selected from the group consisting of~~ including organosilicones and a second emulsifier having a molecular structure similar to that of skin lipids.

Claim 43 (currently amended): A composition in accordance with claim 42, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said organosilicone is cetyl dimethicone copolyol and the second emulsifier is polyglycerol-4-isostearate.

Claim 44 (currently amended): A composition in accordance with claim 42, ~~characterized by being~~ wherein said composition is in the form of micro-particles smaller than 3  $\mu\text{m}$ .



Claim 45 (currently amended): A composition in accordance with claim 44, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein the micro-particles have a size smaller than 1 $\mu$ m.

Claim 46 (new): A process in accordance with claim 5, wherein the oxygen-removing compound is propylene glycol.

Claim 47 (new): An aqueous composition in accordance with claim 20, wherein the oxygen-removing compound is propylene glycol.

Claim 48 (new): A two-phase composition in accordance with claim 31, wherein the oxygen-removing compound is propylene glycol.